

the property (step 114), which will be displayed by the home page 18 (step 116), request a digitized full motion video clip (step 118) which will be downloaded and displayed by the home page 18 (step 120) showing the point of interest in greater detail, or request the property be added to a list of properties of interest by selecting a check box for each property of interest (step 122). If the user requests the property be added to an interest list, the system 10 establishes the list and adds the property to the list (step 124). The user is then asked if he wants the system 10 to display the list (step 126). If the user decides to display the list, he is given the option to edit the list (steps 128 and 130). If the user declines, processing continues.

After the first search is completed, the user is allowed to conduct another search or exit the search procedure (step 132). If the user decides to end the search, the user is allowed to view (step 134) and edit (step 136) the interest list. The user is also prompted to complete a user information form (step 138) so that property managers for the selected properties can be notified of the user's interest so that the property managers can contact the user. After the user completes the user information form, the system updates the property manager notification lists (step 140) and sends the notification lists to the appropriate property managers (step 142) using e-mail or another appropriate method.

The system 12 is also configured so that lessors and property managers can easily establish and maintain listings in the database 22 for the users to access. FIGS. 7 and 8 illustrates the process for establishing and maintaining property listing in the database 22.

A property manager may enter and update property listing in the system 10 through accessing the home page 18 and selecting the appropriate menu item. Upon entering the property entry/update portion of the system 12, the system first checks to see if this property manager is a new customer 200.

If the property manager is a new customer, the system will display a new customer application form 202 which must be filled in by the property manager to set up an account for the property manager. Once the new customer application form has been filled out, the new property form will be displayed 204. The property manager may fill in the new property form with information relating to the property to be listed including size, number of bedrooms/bathrooms, cost and other amenities. After the new property form is completed, the system 10 displays a graphic map and the property manager is prompted to recursively select regions on the map narrowing the geographic region displayed to the appropriate quadrant where the property is located. The property manager then selects the exact location of the property on the quadrant map 206. After the location of the property has been selected, the system 10 asks the property manager if there are additional properties to list 208. If the property manager indicates that there are, the system loops back to step 204 and displays another new property form. If the property manager indicates that he is done entering properties, the system creates a temporary repository file 210 containing the new property entries and e-mails the temporary repository file to the system administrator 212 for review and approval. After the system administrator has approved the new customer, the new property listing are added to the database and points of interest indicating the new listings are added to the appropriate user quadrant map.

If the property manager is not a new customer, the system prompts the property manager for his login ID and password and verifies the password 214. After password verification,

the property manager is asked if he wants to enter a new listing or update an existing listing 216. If the property manager wishes to enter a new listing, the system 10 displays the new property form 218 and the property manager is allowed to fill in the new property form with information relating to the property. After the new property form is completed, the system 10 displays a graphic map and the property manager is prompted to recursively select regions on the map narrowing the geographic region displayed to the appropriate quadrant where the property is located. The property manager then selects the exact location of the property on the quadrant map 220. The system 10 then enters the new property listing into the database and adds the corresponding point of interest indicating the new listing to the appropriate user quadrant map 222. The system 10 then asks the property manager if he is done adding/editing property listings 224. If the answer is yes, the system 10 exits the property entry/update procedure. If the answer is no, the system 10 loops back up to step 216.

If the property manager indicates at step 216 that he is not entering a new property listing, the system allows the property manager to select an existing point of interest by narrowing the geographic region to the appropriate quadrant where the property is located and selecting the point of interest 226. The system then asks the property manager if the selected point of interest should be deleted 228. If the answer is yes, the point of interest and corresponding database record are deleted 230 from the system 10, the repository is updated 222 and the system asks the property manager if he has completed his entry/update procedure. If the answer is no, the system 10 displays and edit form and allows the property manager to edit the database record corresponding to the selected point of interest 232. After editing, the system 10 updates the repository 222 and asks the property manager if he has completed his entry/update procedure 224.

The system 10 is also configured to notify property managers when a user has indicated an interest in one of the property manager's listed properties. The first step in establishing a property manager file involves entering and verifying the property manager's ID and password 300. After the ID and password have been verified, the property manager will be required to fill in an information request form 302 with information about the property manager. The system 10 will create a property manager file 304 containing any user inquiries for the property manager. The property manager will then be prompted to enter a return e-mail address. The system will check for the presence of this e-mail address 306. If an e-mail address is entered, the system will e-mail the user inquiries to the property manager 308. If an e-mail address is not entered, the system will send the file using File Transfer Protocol or another suitable method to the property manager 310. In either case, after the file is sent, the property manager is asked if he is done with information retrieval 312. If the answer is yes, the system 10 exits the information retrieval procedure. If the answer is no, the system 10 returns to step 302 and continues processing.

It is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the exact construction illustrated and described above, but that various changes and modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the following claims.

We claim:

1. A method of presenting, searching, selecting and maintaining geographic specific housing information contained in a database and supplied by various property managers, the method comprising the steps of: